

## **P-20 Council Meeting**

Thursday, October 17  
10:00am – 4:00pm

Sugar Creek Elementary School  
200 N. Towanda Avenue  
Normal, IL

Normal: Karen Hunter-Anderson, Roger Eddy, Larry Frank (for Audrey Soglin), Theresa Hawley, Kurt Hilgendorf, Erika Hunt, Joyce Karon, Deb Kasperski, Chris Koch, Gary Niehaus, John Rico, Jane Russell, Julie Smith, Robin Steans, Deb Strauss, Miguel del Valle, Eric Zarnikow

Phone: Paul Sarvela (for Glenn Poshard)

### **MINUTES**

#### **I. Welcome and Introductions – Chairman Miguel del Valle**

Chair thanked Council members and guests for joining the meeting. Chair welcomed new P-20 Council member, Kurt Hilgendorf, from the Chicago Teachers Union. He then called for introduction of Council members.

#### **II. Review and Approval of July Meeting Minutes**

Chair called for edits or corrections to the minutes. Minutes were approved as presented.

#### **III. Welcome from Superintendent – Superintendent Gary Niehaus, Unit 5 School District and April Schermann, Normal Community West High School**

Chair thanked Council member and Superintendent of the Unit 5 School District, Gary Niehaus, for hosting the Council. Niehaus thanked Council for holding the meeting in his district and provided a brief overview of local efforts including a web based instructional resource system and the child parent center. He then invited district educators to provide additional detail about the use of the computer based platform for sharing resources and implementing the Common Core as well as efforts to more effectively engage families and enhance student success.

#### **IV. Common Core & PARCC Update – Susie Morrison, IL State Board of Education (ISBE)**

Morrison describe state led efforts to support implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) at the local level including professional learning opportunities, sample lesson plans, and a monthly newsletter. Hard copies of examples were provided and electronic copies are available through the ISBE website.

V. **Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Student Success Panel Discussion (80 mins)**

Moderator: Dr. Lizanne DeStefano, Council Coordinator

Panelists:

- Elaine Allensworth, University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research
- Shawn Brown, VOYCE Project
- Leslie Juby, School Success Task Force
- Melissa Mitchell, IL Federation for Community Schools

Council Coordinator, Lizanne DeStefano, welcomed panelists and provided introductions for each. Panelists provided a brief presentation followed by questions and comments for the panel. Copies of slides were made available with the meeting materials in hard copy and on the P-20 website.

Allensworth focused on findings of her research around indicators of freshmen being “on track” for high school graduation and the recommendations of the High School Graduation, Achievement, and Success Commission which she co-chaired with Chairman del Valle. Brown described the work of the VOYCE Project, a community based organization helping to empower and support Chicago students advocating for high quality education and more just disciplinary policies and practices. Juby shared the work of the School Success Task Force, which addressed barriers to academic achievement, specifically related to truancy, suspension, and expulsion. Mitchell presented on ways in which out of class time can be used more effectively to enhance student learning and enrichment opportunities to reduce truancy and behavioral challenges.

VI. **Lunch**

Council broke for lunch.

VII. **Understanding Factors Impacting Student Success and Achievement: Overview of Illinois Trends in Absenteeism, Discipline, and Graduation Rates** – Superintendent Chris Koch, IL State Board of Education

Superintendent Koch provided a presentation on statewide trends in absenteeism, discipline, and drop out rates followed by discussion with the Council. His presentation included information on these trends over time and across sub-groups. He noted that due to changing data definitions some graphs may depict anomalies, for example truant and chronically truant.

VIII. **IL Board of Higher Education Updates & Announcements** – Executive Director Harry Berman, IL Board of Higher Education

Harry Berman provided updates on behalf of the IL Board of Higher Education including information on Complete College America’s Guided Pathways to Success. Guiding principles of the initiative include urging students to take 15 hours per term, identifying a meta-major or area of interest, and engaging in intensive advising. Illinois is one of only 5 states receiving a technical assistance grant for this work.

IX. **Committee Updates**

**a. Data, Assessment, and Accountability Committee – Dea Meyer & Robin Steans**

Steans reported on DAA Committee meetings which included discussion of school report card roll out and technology infrastructure needs associated with online instructional supports and web based assessments. Committee also noted that during their last meeting, there were concerns related to the presentation of data from the Five Essentials survey which was conducted statewide for the first time this year and included as a part of the newly redesigned school report card. Co-chairs indicated that they intend to pursue further discussion with the State Board and other stakeholders on questions regarding the transition to the PARCC assessment.

Steans introduced a motion to build on the resolution previously passed by the Council in support of the State Board's request for \$250 million capital investment in ensuring schools across the state were able to benefit from electronic learning supports and real time assessments of college and career readiness. Information from speed tests conducted by in partnership with as well as PARCC Tool were shared indicating that based on the response of districts, roughly 1 in 4 schools would be able to administer online assessments and access web-based teaching and learning supports today. Following Council discussion, a majority of the Council voted to endorse a motion identifying potential sources of funding to support needed investments including unobligated school construction grant funds. Council also agreed that additional information on the topic was needed. Approved motion language as follows:

"The Illinois P20 Council recommends that the State meet the growing infrastructure needs of schools and districts to provide robust technology-infused instruction and assessment. Specifically, we encourage the General Assembly to permit the use of appropriated, non-obligated dollars that may exist in School Construction funds, from video gaming receipts, that might be generated by a time-limited state retail sales tax, or from other available sources to begin to meet what has become a time-sensitive and urgent need."

**b. Family, Youth, and Community Engagement Committee – Joyce Karon & Deb Strauss**

Co-chairs have continued to work with ISBE on the roll out of the new School Report Card. They are also excited about progress on developing outreach materials and a communications plan for the IL Educational Opportunities for Military Children Council. Lastly, both co-chairs have been participating in the newly formed Implementation Review Committee to ensure coordination and integration of feedback from various stakeholder groups.

**c. Implementation Review Committee – Roger Eddy & Jane Russell**

Co-chairs provided an update on their work including a summary of their first meeting which was well attended. Group surveyed those who expressed interest in participating in the Committee to identify priority education initiatives. They indicated that their next steps include reviewing the recommendations and evaluations from other groups working on initiatives identified as high priorities and developing a work plan which details their objective/s, activities, and resources needed.

**d. Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Committee – Erika Hunt**

Erika Hunt reported out on behalf of the Diverse Educator Pipeline Working Group, a sub-group of the TLE Committee. The group has heard from several guest speakers on models for enhancing the diversity of the educator workforce including Grow Your Own, Teach for America, and the IBHE Diversifying Faculty Initiative. They have also reviewed and discussed the Pathways Learning Exchange model and have decided to pursue a Request for Information (RFI) to generate additional proposals on potential partnerships geared towards enhancing teacher diversity.

**X. Educator Pipeline Report Presentation – Brad White, IL Education Research Council (IERC)**

Brad White presented on the IERC's study on characteristics of the educator workforce including racial and academic composition. He began by sharing findings of previous studies including that academically skilled teachers have been shown to have a positive impact on student learning and that racially diverse teachers have been shown to have a positive impact on the educational outcomes of non-White students. Additionally, some research shows that efforts to improve the academic skills of the overall teaching workforce can have a negative impact on teacher diversity. This information provided a focus question for the research which is "How can policies and practices be designed to support the supply of academically skilled and racially/ethnically diverse educators?".

The study used a longitudinal dataset which tracked students from high school graduation to college and into their career as public school teachers. Key findings included a) academic preparation matters but so does early intentions of going into teaching b) the transition from certification into employment is critical in the pipeline c) Whites tended to progress through the college pipeline, aspire to teach, transition to certification and teaching at higher rates than non-Whites. Lastly, he shared promising practices for increasing the proportion of racially diverse, academically talented teacher candidates including recruiting at highly competitive colleges and out of state institutions and exploring alternative certification options. Other recommendations included recruiting beginning in high school, holding teacher preparation program accountable for both quality and diversity of their candidates, and statewide initiatives to fund teacher preparation programs that target high-achieving minority candidates.

**XI. Agency Updates**

Karen Hunter Anderson spoke on behalf of the IL Community College Board and provided relevant updates including plans to release an economic impact study in 2014, the scheduling of Community College Week in the spring, and a reminder that the vendor for GED tests has changed and the assessment will soon only be available via computer. A significant price increase is associated with this change and is expected to be problematic for many students pursuing their GED.

Eric Zarnikow indicated that the IL Student Assistance Commission continues its work with the MAP Advising Task Force which was established by the legislature to review current advising practices and make recommendations on possible ways to strengthen advising policies and practices in an effort to better serve MAP students.

Janet Holt provided an update from the IL Education Research Council. She announced several studies and reports which are underway or have recently been released. She noted that these reports are shared directly with the P-20 Council and made available through their website at [www.ierc.siu.edu](http://www.ierc.siu.edu).

**XII. Adjourn**